



## NEWSLETTER - NOVEMBER 2017

Rest assured... it ain't all text! To wet the appetite here's some picture previews...



### **From this issue's Editor...**

*We (read "I"... ) do apologise for the scarcity of e-newsletters this year. We hope that you check what we're doing via Facebook and Twitter - the more people who "follow" & "friend" both, the easier it is to deliver short and frequent activity updates. We also encourage you to keep an eye on the website, the first stage of an update of which has recently been implemented. A new more interactive website is in the planning stages and is due early next year.*

*We have been very busy and have been achieving some great wins for the Co-op and for the region. More is still to come!*

*Please come to the AGM on Sun 26th November to learn more! You should have received the official announcement sent via email on 11 October; an update is in the AGM Reminder item below....*

*And remember.... We are always looking for more people to help, and finding someone who loves providing the occasional article or is interested in developing newsletters/ communications would be fabulous ! And my thanks to all who have contributed to this issue!*

*Peter*

## 2017 AGM: 26 November

**Please plan on attending the 2017 AGM on Sunday 26th November at the Wonthaggi Theatrical Group auditorium (on the left as you enter the car park) at Wonthaggi State Coal Mine, 10.30 for get-together over coffee/cake for 11 am start. A map of the site here:**

**[https://parkweb.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf\\_file/0003/517719/Map-State-Coal-Mine.pdf](https://parkweb.vic.gov.au/data/assets/pdf_file/0003/517719/Map-State-Coal-Mine.pdf)**

## 2017 AGM: 26 November (cont.)

Our guest speaker is Chris Weir from the BendigoSustainability Group - a dynamic organisation that has already executed projects such as we are embarking on. Find out more about BSG is here:

<https://www.bsg.org.au/>

Chris will have insights and information highly relevant and interesting to us!

There will be a BBQ lunch afterwards: BYO chair, preferred protein and drinks. We will supply implements, salads and cakes! All are welcome.

*And... an important item at the AGM is the Election of New Board Members!*  
One of our retiring Board Members is not re-standing for election; Sarah has (very understandably) become a bit too busy to be able to fit in her board work. Her IT/ Communications skills and assistance will be sorely missed! And John Coulter has stood down in order to avoid any potential conflict of interest as he takes on the task of Project Development Officer for the State Coal Mine project. We are pleased to be able to say we have already received one new nomination, and would be delighted to hear from any other Co-op members potentially interested in nominating; the board can be up to nine members. If you are interested, a letter to the Chair detailing interests/ skills and an up-to-date CV would be appreciated; alternatively simply send an email to [info@eico-op.com.au](mailto:info@eico-op.com.au) and we will get in touch with you. We are particularly looking for members with skills and expertise in the areas of marketing/ communications (including IT/ social media), financial, business and legal as well as good governance commitment and experience. We have informal/ intermittent work groups as well as the regular Board, so beginning with a lesser commitment is always welcome. With the installation at the State Coal mine due to commence shortly there will be plenty of interesting

**Please stay with us; also in this issue:**

- 1.DGR Status Granted**
- 2.Old Energy-New Energy Project at State Coal Mine Progress**
- 3.Events that have been organised by Energy Innovation Co-op**
- 4.Coalition for Community Energy (C4CE)**
- 5.El Co-op & Southern CORE Fund Planned Support for Manna Gum Community House and Foster Pool Committee**
- 6.Some Relevant Interesting Recent Other News**

## 1. DGR Status Granted - THIS IS A BIGGIE!



After months of nail-biting as we waited for the result of our application for DGR (tax Deductible Gift Recipient) status, we finally received the response we hoped for. Given the current climate regarding tax-deductible gift status for some types of organisations this was indeed good news!

Given that our project at the State Coal Mine Wonthaggi is a likely early beneficiary of donations made under this status, the mine was a highly appropriate venue for an announcement. Seen here at the mine with a miner's cottage in the background are (from left):

*Susan Davies and Moragh Mackay (EiCo-op), Cr Pamela Rothfield (Mayor BCSC), Russell Broadbent MP, Peter Wonfor (EiCo-op), Cr Andrew McEwen (SGSC), Pam Cameron (Bass Coast Community Foundation [BCCF]) John Coulter (EiCo-op), Melissa Hayes and David Wall (BCCF), Bruce Hydon (EiCo-op), Ray Jansson (Phillip Island) Cr Brett Tessari (Deputy Mayor Bass Coast Shire)*

## 2. Old Energy-New Energy Project at State Coal Mine: Progress



Left Photo: **At the Mine Project Launch.** From left: Cr. Alyson Skinner (SGSC Councillor), David Wall (BCCF EO), Moragh MacKay, (EI Co-op Chair), Pamela Rothfield (BCSC Mayor), Bruce Hydon (Treasurer, EI Co-op)



Right Photo: **Incredible support from Bass Coast Community Foundation.** From left: Cr Andrew McEwen (SGSC), Moragh Mackay (EiCo-op), Russell Broadbent MP, Cr Pamela Rothfield (Mayor BCSC), Melissa (BCCF), Susan Davies EiCo-op), Bruce Hydon (EiCo-op), Pam Cameron (BCCF)

## Old Energy-New Energy Project at State Coal Mine: Progress (continued)

We are making good progress with our Old Energy-New Energy project at the State Coal Mine Wonthaggi. These are "unseen" but vital items, including:

Signing a funding agreement (\$240,000) with the new Energy Jobs Fund (NEJF)

Appointing a Part Time Project Officer, John Coulter, who will work on implementing the first two stages of the project: installation of PV panels and batteries at the State Coal Mine and helping assess future projects for the Southern CORE (Community Owned Renewable Energy) revolving fund.

Developing a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Parks Victoria; this becomes the economic basis for the project that is beneficial to all parties.

Developing documentation for the various approvals required, including Crown lease (for the land on which the system will be located), Ausnet Services (for connecting the system to the power grid), Heritage Victoria, and Council Planning permits)

**We are indebted to the Bass Coast Community Foundation for their support; they have been generous not only in a financial support sense as the cheque**

## 3. Events Organised and Participated in by ElCo-op

### 3.1 Small Solar PV & Batteries in Practice: Coal Creek 19 Feb 2017



This was a brilliant opportunity to see a residential-size PV array with battery storage system in action, get a feel for the advantages it offers and see what the installation looks like.

Presentations were made by Rhys Freeman about the energy assessments that are essential to defining the system to match the size and pattern of energy usage, Andy McCarthy (Gippsland Solar) and George Fairlie (El Co-op) about the system itself, Gil Freeman (Grow Lightly) about the consequential benefits as the customer

For a close-up look at a demo system John and Linda Ballis (GridEdge) brought their demo trailer with some PV panels and a 9.6 kWh Sodium-Nickel (SoNick) battery.

**3.2 Sustainable House event, Nyora, 26 March 2017 and**  
**3.3 Mirboo North Community Energy Hub (MNCEH) Event,**  
**Mirboo North 24 May 2017**



A large group of us spent an informative afternoon in Nyora at an energy efficient and sustainable home in Nyora thanks to the generosity of the homeowner; the energy efficient house designer Sue Mitchell was on hand to answer a multitude of questions following her informative introduction and description of the home and its features. This provided a lot of perspective about what makes a building sustainable and energy efficient.

The Mirboo North Community Energy Hub (MNCEH) event covered a wide range of Community Energy (CE) project matters but with a focus on the feasibility study carried out by MNCEH for wind and solar projects by Ian Southall (MNCEH), Trent Mair (Trentleck) and Chris Barfoot. The Co-op supported this event with a presentation by Susan Davies about CE governance and how the Co-op can assist with this. Presentations were also made by Peter Murrif (Ausnet Services) about the Yackandandah Project, and an assessment of where CE is at present by Keiran Price (Alternative Technology Association).

***Financing Solar PV Systems for Business:***

**3.4 Korumburra, 15 June 2017 and**  
**3.5 Mirboo North, 4 October 2017**

Solar systems have been widely adopted by Australian households but businesses have been hesitant to install due to upfront costs. With the rising price of electricity and reducing cost of installing solar business can finance a solar system and save money from day one.

With this in mind The Co-op organised two information sessions aimed at helping businesses not only be aware of the potential benefit of solar PV systems to their bottom line (and the environment) but introduce funding options available for such investments.



George Fairlie, (Energy Innovation Co-op & Solar installer) gave us an introduction to what's involved in calculating solar suitability for your business.

James Wark (June) and Shay Singh (October) from the Sustainable Melbourne Fund introduced us to Environmental Upgrade Finance - fixed interest rates long-term loans for business environmental upgrades.

Susan Davies (Energy Innovation Co-op) described the huge potential of Community investment as a potential source of finance.

Shane Clayton and Andy McCarthy (Gippsland Solar) described a number of situations where financing of solar systems at business premises proved to be highly successful.

Given that the October event was held at the Grand Ridge Brewery, Eric Walters, the owner, was able to give us a highly relevant overview of the Brewery's Solar PV project and what it has done for them.

Ian Southall (Mirboo North CE Hub & GCCN) updated us on the exciting Mirboo North Community Energy Project

### ***3.6 Solar Battery Storage Systems and Sustainable Living Information Session, Fish Creek, 25 June 2017***

This was a well-attended and wide-ranging set of presentations and discussion.

George Fairlie (EiCo-op) provided the keynote presentation, providing very useful information about solar systems, energy usage and data sources available.

John Ballis of GridEdge described battery types and introduced the Sonick (Sodium Nickel Chloride) batteries.

Shane Clayton of Gippsland Solar described the variety of their projects - both residential and business, large and small and the challenges they pose.

Trent Mair of Trentlec; Trentlec has a long history in Gippsland supplying, installing and maintaining solar PV, Wind and Hydro renewable energy systems and talked about the importance of energy efficiency when it comes to sustainable living.

Susan Davies (EiCo-op) spoke about the Co-op's Southern CORE fund and coming capacity to manage investment-model CORE projects.

Ian Southall gave a brief update about the Mirboo North Community Energy Hub.

Shay Singh from the Sustainable Melbourne Fund was on hand to talk about financing options for businesses interested in installing PV systems.

### **3.6 Solar Battery Storage Systems and Sustainable Living Information Session, Fish Creek, 25 June 2017 (cont.)**

Trent Mair of Trentlec; Trentlec has a long history in Gippsland supplying, installing and maintaining solar PV, Wind and Hydro renewable energy systems and talked about the importance of energy efficiency when it comes to sustainable living.

Susan Davies (EiCo-op) spoke about the Co-op's Southern CORE fund and coming capacity to manage investment-model CORE projects.

Ian Southall gave a brief update about the Mirboo North Community Energy Hub.

Shay Singh from the Sustainable Melbourne Fund was on hand to talk about financing options for businesses interested in installing PV systems.

## **4. Coalition for Community Energy (C4CE) Congress, 28 Feb 2017**



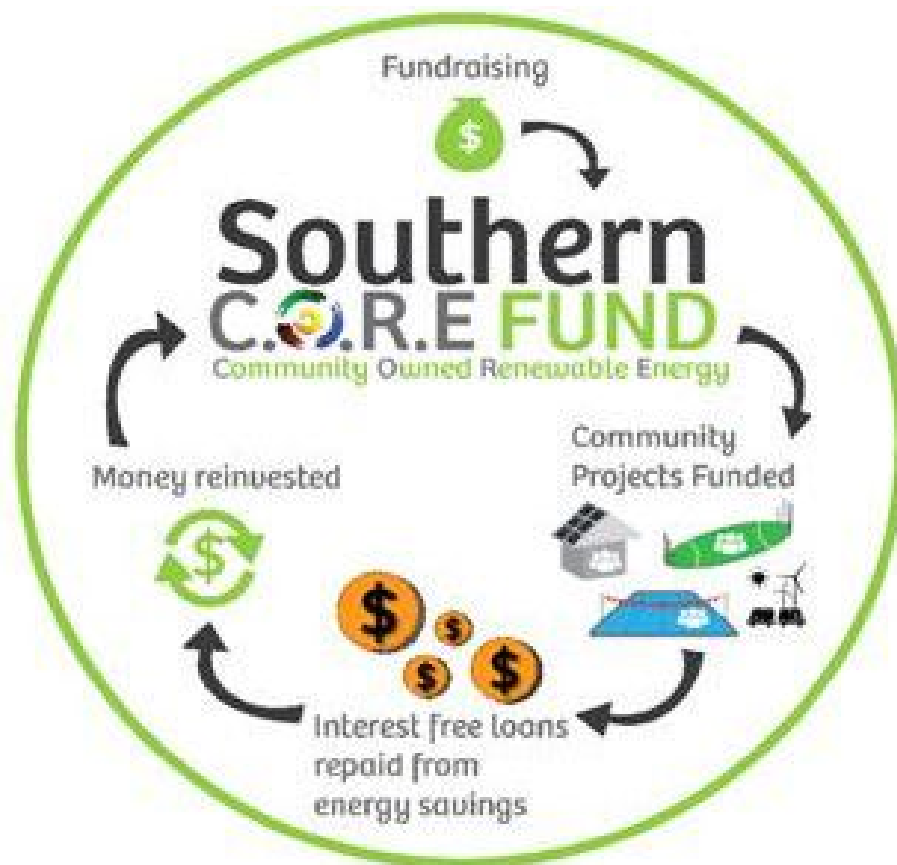
*Closing Plenary discussion in progress in  
Melbourne Town Hall auditorium*



*A group of participants, mostly from  
Gippsland, at the congress.*

This event was noteworthy not only because of what was learned, but also because the deadline for filing our application under the NEJF (New Energy Jobs Fund) for the project at the State Coal Mine, Wonthaggi was the day after the Congress closed. The mandatory electronic filing deadline was met with only hours to spare - despite heroic efforts to do this prior to the Congress. Of course we now know this was well worth the effort!

## 5. EI Co-op & Southern CORE Fund Planned Support for Manna Gum Community House and Foster Pool Committee



Manna Gum Community House and Foster Pool Committee joined forces to support each other's fundraising efforts for solar PV and energy efficiency installations. They raised a lot of the funding needed but not quite enough.

The Co-op recently received a letter of application from the Foster Pool Committee for a no-interest-loan from our Southern CORE revolving Fund. We will meet with them shortly. The Co-op has now secured sufficient funds to enable such a loan to be made.

We have to finalise the proper process with our Public Fund Management Committee! And do it all quickly enough for the Foster group to get on and finish their project before Summer!

This will be the Co-op's third donation supporting a local group's energy efficiency or renewable energy installations, but is the first under the Southern CORE Revolving Fund banner and its "no-interest loan" arrangements! So we are excited. Repaid funds will then go on to assist other community groups.

## 6. Some Relevant Interesting Recent Other News

### ***Victorian Residential Efficiency Scorecard System***



The Victorian government has introduced the Victorian Residential Efficiency Scorecard system, a new means of helping homeowners improve the energy efficiency of their home and save significant \$\$ as a result.

Further information including a short introductory video about the program can be found at <https://www.victorianenergysaver.vic.gov.au/scorecard>

Rhys Freeman (a long-time member and supporter of the Co-op) is becoming an accredited Scorecard Assessor, and is looking for some modern (not necessarily new) homes to assess on a test basis. This is a great opportunity to obtain useful information for yourself (under very favourable terms...) and at the same time help Rhys and, potentially, the Co-op. Please contact Rhys at <r.freeman@iinet.net.au> for more information.

### ***Victorian Renewable Energy Target becomes Law***



One piece of very good news!! The Victorian Renewable Energy Target has become law. Information about this important milestone can be found at [http://www.melbournefoe.org.au/vret\\_becomes\\_law](http://www.melbournefoe.org.au/vret_becomes_law)

## ***Healthy Soils Sustainable Farms - A Day Out at Cape Liptrap?***



Healthy Soils Sustainable Farms

Tuesday 14 November 2017 10.30am – 2.30pm **(RSVP Needed by Thursday 9 November: See below!)**

Developing a grazing enterprise – yards, infrastructure and watering systems from scratch.

Bruce and Jillian bought their off-grid property (a 40.5 Ha agistment block) in 2014. Lack of power and watering points limited their ability to graze the property effectively. To see how this all changed take a look at this flyer and plan a trip to Cape Liptrap!

RSVP by Thursday 9 November 2017 to Jenny O'Sullivan on  
M: 0419 153 377 or E: [sgln@landcare.net](mailto:sgln@landcare.net)



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